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AUTHOR Creemers, Bert P. M.
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ABSTRACT

The history and structure of education in the Netherlands, the relationship of that structure to educational systems in selected other countries, and the current status of educational innovation in the Netherlands are the major topics of this paper. The author discusses briefly the development of national educational policy, the place of private education, and the roles of national, provincial, and municipal governments in administering and funding different parts of the system. He next describes the characteristics of and legal foundations for the different levels of the educational structure: nursery, primary, special, secondary (including pre-university, general, and several vocational programs), and higher education (including both universities and advanced vocational institutions). Brief descriptions of the educational systems of the United States, England and Wales, Sweden, and the Soviet Union are provided, and major differencs between the Dutch system and those of the other countries are analyzed. Arguing that significant change is needed, the author concludes with a discussion of innovative trends in Dutch educational thought, noting in particular the implications of changes proposed by the current Minister of Education. A brief description of the Netherlands' Educational Research Institute in the North (RION) is appended. (PGD)

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The structure of the educational system in the Netherlands

RION: RESEARCH INSTITUUT VOOR HET ONDERWIJS IN HET NOORDEN

Haren, October 29, 1981

Bert P.M. Creemers

EA 014 742

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. Introduction

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you here in the R.I.O.N., the Institute for Educational Research in the Northern part of the Netherlands. The reason that we come together here is that we have not enough place in the Education Department of the University to come together with so much people. Furthermore there is a close relationship between the Education Department of the University and this institute for educational research. The R.I.O.N. is a foundation separated from the university but closely connected with the university. Not only in the administration but also in the content of the work, the fields we all are working in. For example curriculum research, research in educational innovation, and so on. In fact the R.I.O.N. is founded in 1970 by faculty members of the Department of Education of the university within the Faculty of Pedagogics. But like in other places the Institute of Educational Research developed well and it is even greater than the founding department. At this time about 80 people work part time or full time in this research institute. Most of the research in this institute is connected with educational innovation, so I can tell you this evening not only about the educational structure as an established one, but also about the educational innovation, the developments in education. A lot of innovations take place this time in the structure of education of the Netherlands. Before I tell you about this innovation I shall give you first a description about the educational structure at this time. The educational system in the Netherlands is very differentiated, not only as a result of developments in the past in developing particular approaches for groups of pupils with specific characteristics and aptitudes, but also as a result of different pedagogical ideas about education. Therefore some people say that the Netherlands are an educational museum. Ideas developed in other countries about education got a concrete form in the Netherlands. On the other side the German poet Heine said "the Netherlands are 50 years behind all the developments in the rest of the world". Therefore it is in a way not only an educational museum, but a historical museum too. That I can show you when I compare the educational structure in the Netherlands with that of the surrounding countries.

The outline of my introduction is as follows:

1. A brief historical overview and some specifics of the system
2. A description of the education structure in the Netherlands
3. A comparison with some foreign educational structures, in particulary the United States, Eastern Europe and some Western Europe systems
4. The educational innovation in the Netherlands

In fact I give you a lot of information in a short periode of time. Therefore we made a brochure which contains further information about the R.I.O.N., the text of this talk and additional information about the structure of the Dutch educational system, which we got from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So you can read it over afterwards.

2. A brief historic overview and some general features

Little is known about the existance of schools or an educational system in the Netherlands prior to the 16th century. But the establishment of the universities Leiden (1575), Groningen (1614) and Utrecht (1636) were a major step in this direction. There were no national statutory regulations for education until the 19th century, though there were many various local schemes which differentiated considerably from place to place. The first national school legislation was passed at the beginning of the 19th century. A passage was inserted in the 1948 constitution granting freedom to provide education which meant that the approval of the government was no longer required for the founding of a school. The proponents of denominational education were not satisfied with that, however, as the costs of founding and running the school still had to be borne by the parents. As late as 1857 a bill to provide for the re-imbursement by the state of the expenses of the denominational school was rejected by the lower house. The freedom to provide education remained a contentious issue in Dutch politics until 1917 when the relevent article in the constitution was amended to place state and private school on an equal financial footing. This form of equal financing of state and private education is unique to the Netherlands and is greately prized by the Dutch nation. On the other hand it does give rise to devisions in society according to religious or other

persuations. State education is that provided by central local government (the state or municipalities).

Private education comprices all forms of education which come about as a result of private initiative whether they are run according to religious principles or not (this means that there are roman-catholic schools, protestant schools, but also schools according educational ideas from Montessori, Decroly, Peter Petersen, and so on). The state nursery and primary schools are provided by the municipalities. There are no centrally administrated state schools in this sector. Each municipality is obliged to ensure that there are sufficient state schools which are open to all children irrespective of their religious persuasions. The founding of private schools in this sector is dependent on private initiative. The schools must emanate from an institution or an association which has legal personality. They are only qualified for founding if they can demonstrate that the number of children attending the school will meet the legaly described minimum: if it does than the municipality is obliged to help in the foundation and running of the school and providing the necessary funds. The amounts involved are repaid to the municipality by the state on the same base as for the state schools. In 1978 almost 70% of all the primary schools in the Netherlands were private.

State and private secondary schools are also financed on an equal base by the state. The Minister of Education and Science draws up an annual plan stating which schools will be eligible for financing over the next three years, the object of which is to insure an overall balance in the types of school available. Applications for inclusion in the plan are submitted by or on behalve of municiple counsils for state schools and by institutions or associations with legal personality for private schools. The Provincial executives are responsible for determining whether a sufficient number of schools has been provided. Schools which can be assumed to be attented by pupils in their final year are always included in the plan provided that the number of such pupils meets the legal minimum.

As the constitution says education is a matter of a continuing concern to the government. As we have seen before the constitution also sets out rules for the financing of private education on the same base as

state education. Much emphasis is placed in both the constitution and the educational acts on the garantee of freedom to give and recieve education. Most of the education acts are dated in the last 20 years. But primary education and nursery education are based on acts from respectively 1920 and 1955. They will be replaced in the future by a new act on primary education. Also as we shall see in paragraphe 5 there is a new act in preparation for secondary education.
In the Netherlands education is compulsory from the first of August of the year in which the child reaches the age of six years and eight months. At that point the parents are obliged under the compulsory education act to register their children at a school. Education ceases to be compulsory at the end of the acadamic year in which the child has completed ten years of education at one or more schools or at the end of the academic year in which the child reaches the age of sixteen. All young people who are no longer in full time education after completing ten years schooling are still obliged to attend a part time education for one year which means attending an educational or training establishment of two days a week. No fees are charged for nursery education, primary education, special education and the first four years of secondary education. Fees not exceeding f 500,-- per child per acadamic year are charged after the fourth year of secondary education. The amount of the fee is determined by the inspector of taxes on the base of the amount of income and wealth tax payable by the parents and taking account of the number of children in the family. For higher vocational education and university courses higher fees are charged.

3. The structure of the education system

For a better understanding we have made a scheme from the educational system. In the following I will give an explanation of this scheme. Furthermore for those who are interested in statistics an overview of the amount of pupils and students in full time education in 1979 and 1978 is provided. Some explanation of the scheme.

1. Nursery education

Nursery (i.e. pre-primary) education in the Netherlands is regulated by the Nursery Education Act which entered into force on January 1, 1956. As a general rule a child can be admitted to a nursery school on his fourth birthday and has to leave as soon as he is seven. Although

nursery education is not compulsory practically all four and five year olds go to a nursery school. Children usually attend nursery school for three hours in the morning from Monday till Friday and two hours in the afternoon on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and they have about twelve weeks' holiday over the year.
Nursery schools do not teach in the ordinary sense of the word: each school has a play and work plan. Each school has a head and most of them one or more other teachers.

2. Primary education

Primary education is regulated by the 1920 Primary Education Act and is compulsory from the first of August of the year in which a child reaches the age of six years and eight months. Children may also be admitted on August 1 if they will be six before October 1 of the year of admission.
Primary education covers six years each consisting of a minimum of 1000 teaching hours (except for the first two years when 880 hours may suffice).
The aim of primary education is to provide children with the best possible continuous development, taking account of the individual differences in their progression through successive stages of development.
Primary school teachers are qualified to teach all subjects and specialised teachers other than P.E. teachers are a rarity in primary schools. Pupils at primary schools must be seen to have made satisfactory progress at the end of each year, otherwise they are required to repeat the year.

3. Special education

The 1967 Special Education Decree regulates all matters relating to special education which is provided at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. Children requiring special educational treatment are devided into two categories:

a. children with sensory, physical and mental handicaps and children with behavioural problems;
b. children whose parents follow a travelling trade: bargees, caravan dwellers and fairground operators.

The first category is by far the largest and of these the largest group consists of children with average or severe learning difficulties. The minimum age for special education is three for some categories and the maximum is seventeen or twenty in exceptional cases.
Schools in the special education category include those for partially hearing and deaf children, those with severe speech defects, the partially sighted and blinds, the physically handicapped, children in convalescent homes, delicate children, epileptics, the mentally handicapped, ESN children in institutions, severely maladjusted children, children in care, those attached to institutes for disturbed children, children with learning and behavioural difficulties and children with multiple handicaps.
The second category operates at the pre-primary and primary levels only, with a maximum age of fifteen, or eighteen in rare cases. Mobile schools are organised for the children of fairground operators.
Special committees decide on admissions to special education. They are composed (at minimum) of the head of the school to which admission is sought, a medical specialist, and a psychologist or educationalist: other experts may also be appointed.
At present 5% of all children of school age attend special schools.

4. Secondary education

General characteristics

Secondary education comprises all post-primary education except the universities. The major categories of secondary education in the Netherlands are:

a. pre-university education (v.w.o.)
b. general secondary education (a.v.o.)
c. vocational education (b.o.)

The Secondary Education Act (WVO) which came into force in 1968, contains regulations governing these forms of education and the schools at which they are provided. The purpose of the Act is to create a coherent system of secondary education facilities. There are various instruments available for this purpose, for example the planning procedure for state financing of new schools. Provisions concerning the first year of secondary school, ("the transitional class"), which facilitate progression to the second year of more than one type of school, have also been made with a view to improving the internal cohesion of the system, and postponing a final

choice of school. It is also possible to form combined schools, which are defined in the Act as a single school community (with one school board and one principal), consisting of several schools - for example, a general secondary school and a vocational school, or a pre-university school and a general secondary school. At least one of the schools in the combination must be a secondary school.

There are also evening classes and courses which run parallel to many types of secondary school and which can lead to the same qualifications.

An admission committee is appointed by the competent authority of the secondary school or schools concerned to decide on admissions. It consists of the head and at least two teachers from the secondary school concerned. Heads and teachers from the secondary schools may also sit in the committee. Before advising or deciding on admissions the committee considers the report by the pupil's primary or special school headteacher.

Children wishing to be admitted to pre-university or higher general secondary schools must demonstrate their ability to follow the course-work at the school in question. Their aptitude is tested by at least one of the following methods:

a. an entrance examination, set by the teachers of the secondary school concerned, which tests at least Dutch and arithmetic;
b. a trial period in a secondary school class, consisting of at least 16 and at most 32 lessons of 50 minutes' duration;
c. assessment of the knowledge and intelligence displayed by the pupil during his last year or years at primary school;
d. a psychological test.

Method c. has the most general application: the other three methods are now scarcely used if at all.

Pre-university education (v.w.o.)

This type of education is provided at three types of schools: gymnasiums, atheneums and lyceums. All three types have a six-year course, with direct entry from primary school and prepare pupils for university entrance. The distinction between gymnasiums and atheneums is that the former must provide Latin and Greek courses, while it is not possible to take these subjects at an atheneum except where an atheneum has been granted special permission to teach Latin. A lyceum is a combination of a gymnasium and an atheneum with a common first year.

After the fourth or fifth year the gymnasiums and atheneums are divided into A- and B-sides. The B-sides have mathematics and science as the main subjects in both cases; the A-side at a gymnasium has classical languages and the A-side at an atheneum has economics and modern languages as the main subjects. Each course culminates in a leaving examination in seven subjects, five compulsory and two of the candidates own choice.
The curricula of these schools cover more than just the examination subjects and there are compulsory lessons in social studies, P.E. and some creative and art subjects. Schools may also offer other courses, such as Russian, Spanish, Esperanto, Hebrew, religious studies, Christian history, philosophy, etc.

General secondary education (a.v.o.)
This type of education is given at elementary, junior and senior levels all with direct entry from primary school.
The elementary level (l.a.v.o.) is provided in the first year or first two years, of junior secondary vocational schools or else in a separate two-year course. The curriculum includes Dutch, one or more foreign languages, history and geography, social studies, mathematics, natural history, music, art, craft and P.E. Under certain circumstances additional subjects may be taught. As l.a.v.o. is equivalent to the first two years at junior secondary vocational schools (l.b.o.) in which general subjects are taught, there is no examination at the end.
Having completed two years of l.a.v.o., most pupils do in fact go on to a junior secondary vocational school, if only because they have not yet reached schoolleaving age under the Compulsory Education Act.
Junior general secondary education (m.a.v.o.) is a four years course. The leaving certificate from a m.a.v.o. school may give access to senior secondary vocational schools (m.b.o.) and to the fourth year of senior general secondary schools (h.a.v.o.). H.a.v.o. courses last five years and the h.a.v.o. certificate offers access to higher vocational education. Like the pre-university school, junior and senior general secondary schools provide the broad basis for future vocational training, but at a lower level. The subjects taught are Dutch, two or three languages (French, German, English), history, geography, social studies, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, P.E. and one or more creative or expressive subjects. Additional subjects may be included. The leaving

examination comprises six subjects, which must include Dutch and one foreign language, the other four subjects being of the candidates own choice from the following: the other two foreign languages, Frisian, history, geography, mathematics, physics, biology, commercial practice, and an expressive subject.

Secondary vocational education (b.o.)

Vocational education in the Netherlands is divided into eight major types and is given at junior, senior and higher levels:

1. Technical education preparing for technical careers, and nautical education preparing for careers in inland shipping, Rhine shipping, coasting, sea shipping and fisheries.
2. Domestic science/home economics, which gives a general and practical preparation for housekeeping, the caring professions and service careers.
3. Agricultural education prepares for careers in farming and includes various forms of crop cultivation, agricultural trades and agricultural technology. Agricultural education is financed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.
4. Tradepeople's education prepares for self-employment in a trade, craft or service industry.
5. Economic and administrative education prepares for bookkeeping and clerical occupations.
6. Teacher training offers courses in nursery school teaching and, at a higher level, in primary and secondary teaching.
7. "Socio-pedagogic" education at senior and higher levels prepares for careers in youth work, adult education, cultural and social work, community development, personnel work, child care and protection, health care, librarianship, journalism and other related professions.
8. Arts education, only offered at higher level, prepares for careers in all branches of the arts: music, dance, drama, cabaret, the visual arts and film.

Junior secondary vocational education (l.b.o.)

L.b.o. plays an important part in the Dutch education system, as some 30% of children enter directly from primary school. All junior secondary vocational courses last four years, the first two devoted almost entirely to general subjects and the last two to vocational training and education.

Senior secondary vocational education (m.b.o.)
Senior secondary vocational education is open to students with a leaving certificate from a corresponding junior vocational school or a m.a.v.o. leaving certificate in the required subjects. The length of course varies but there is a four years maximum.

More information about the different forms of junior and senior secondary vocational education is provided by a guide from the Ministry of Education which is included in your set.

Short secondary vocational courses (k.m.b.o.) represent a new form of education for 16 to 18 year-olds, which facilitates cooperation between junior and senior secondary vocational schools, young workers' educational institutes and apprenticeship training establishments. It provides facilities for vocational training, linkage and orientation programmes. The maximum length of the courses is three years. K.m.b.o. leads either to a job or to further education, which may take the form of advanced apprenticeships or related courses in senior secondary education.
K.m.b.o. courses are also intended as a preparation for participation in adult society. The standard attained by pupils by the end of k.m.b.o. courses is equivalent to that at the end of elementary apprenticeship schemes. Efforts are being made to introduce a flexible system of leaving qualifications, with subject certificates.
The new type of course was started in 1979 with 21 pilot projects. K.m.b.o. is governed by the Pilot Projects (New Vocational Courses) Decree. The principle of learning by participation is a key factor in k.m.b.o., which means that pupils are guided through personal and social experiences at school and outside to give them better insight into their own functioning and that of others.
This principle finds fullest expression in what we call "participatie-onderwijs" - compulsory day release courses. There are five compulsory day release experiments in progress, which are also counted as k.m.b.o. pilot projects. There are also another seven cooperative projects with day release involving young workers' educational institutes and apprenticeship training institutes.
Apprenticeships are governed by the 1966 Apprenticeship Act and are characterised by an agreement whereby the apprentice receives training in a particular trade from an employer and at the same time receives

general and theoretical vocational education at an appropriate institute. Entry to apprenticeships is usually from an l.b.o. course, but there are also openings for people who have attended other types of secondary school. There are two levels of apprenticeship training: elementary and advanced, the first taking at least two years and the second at least one year. The supplementary training is provided by apprenticeship training institutes specially set up for the purpose or in separate departments at l.b.o. schools. Usually the courses are held on one day of the week, but there are also evening courses. The courses culminate in a practical and theory examination. Apprentices who only pass in the practical part may be awarded a certificate of practical skill. Apprentices must be under 27 year of age.

5. Higher education (h.o.)

General characteristics

Higher education comprises both university education including universities of technology, and higher vocational education. At present the two types of higher education are still governed by seperate legislation, but government policy now aims to devise a unified system of higher education. The major difference between universities and higher vocational institutes is that the one emphasises the academic approach to a subject and the other its practical side. There are at present 20 universities in the Netherlands and 330 higher vocational institutes of eight different kinds, providing day, evening and part-time courses.

Higher vocational education (h.b.o.)

The h.b.o. system comprises institutes of a number of different types most of which were founded in the twentieth century. Thus the subjects taught are divided among numerous institutes, usually with separate administrations. H.b.o. is at present still governed by the Secondary Education Act.

The h.b.o. system includes the following types:

- technology courses
- home economics courses
- agricultural courses
- tradepeople's courses
- commercial courses
- primary and secondary teacher training
- social work courses
- courses in art

University education (w.o.)

University education is regulated by the University Education Act (WWO) of December 22, 1960 and the 1970 University Administration (Reform) Act. The Netherlands has two types of university, one designated "universiteit" and the other "hogeschool", with only a formal difference between them: an "universiteit" must have at least three faculties, which must include a Faculty of Medicine or a Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

There are four state universities in the Netherlands, one municipal university and two private ones.

There is the University of Limburg (1975), which as yet has only a Faculty of Medicine. There are five universities which are designated "hogeschool", the three universities of technology at Delft, Twente and Eindhoven, the Agricultural University at Wageningen and the Catholic University of Tilburg, which specializes in economics, law and the social sciences. There are also seven colleges of theology whose qualifications are recognised by the Government.

A v.w.o. certificate is required for university entrance. With a certificate from a higher vocational course a student can enter to some specific courses within the university.

There are no admission requirements for mature students, i.e. those aged 25 or over other than an entrance examination.

If there is a shortage of university places a placement committee places first year students in the various universities according to a special allocation formula. Only a limited number of places is available for certain subjects, and they are awarded on the base of a weighted lottery, i.e. one which allows school examination marks to be taken into consideration.

University courses are generally split into three parts: the "propadeutisch" part (one year), the "kandidaats" part (one to two year), and finally the "doctoraal" part (two to three years). Holders of the "doctoraal" certificate are entitled to the designation "doctorandus" (drs.), or if they have studied law, to the designation "meester" (mr.). Thereafter they may obtain a doctorate (and the title dr.) by thesis. Graduates of the universities of technology are entitled to the designation "ingenieur" (at this level abbreviated to ir.). Graduates in certain subjects may go on to qualify through post-graduate courses as doctors, chemists, dentists or veterinary surgeons, for which

professions the "doctoraal" certificate alone is not sufficient. In 1979 there were some 147,500 students registred at Dutch universities, about 30% were women.

4. A comparison with other educational systems

Within the time limits set we have only the possibility to make a rough comparison with other educational systems.

1. United States

After primary education almost everyone goes to the highschool. Within the highschool there is a great diversity of courses, vocational and/or general education. There are also great differences in the level of the courses. I said almost everyone goes to the highschool and almost everyone gets a certificate. After highschool there is higher education. Again there is a great variety in courses which can be distinguished in three categories, namely:

1. junior or community colleges
2. technical institutes and semi-professional schools
3. universities, colleges and professional schools.

In the United States there is not a national schoolsystem but there is a state schoolsystem.

2. England and Wales

The structure of the schoolsystem in England and Wales is as follows:

1. primary education from two to twelve, obliged from the fifth year
2. secondary education from 12 until 19, obliged until the age of 15
3. further education, education for everyone after compulsory education
4. teacher education
5. university education.

1. Primary education is provided by nursery schools (2 till 5), infance schools (5 till 7), junior schools (7 until 11), or by a primary school with nursery, infant and junior classes.
2. There are three types of secondary education: grammar schools which give a preparation for university and higher education; technical schools for children with extremely technical capacities and secondary modern schools with a variety of courses with a lower level

than the grammar schools. The growing dissatisfaction with this system has given the impetus to the comprehensive schools as secondary school system. Secondary schools attend to provide all secondary education of all the children in the given area without an organisation in three sites. The number of this kind of schools is not very high, then in a lot of districts there are beside the comprehensive schools the grammar schools.

3. Further education in a more informal education and a formal education in technical, technological, commercial, art, agricultural and professional colleges.
4. Teacher education. There are different categories for teacher education (colleges of education, colleges of technical education, university departments, and so on).
5. Universities. There are regular universities and one open university. The students are distinguished in under graduates and (post) graduates.

3. Sweden

The following schools provide education in Sweden.

1. basicschool (grundskola) for 7 until 16 years
2. middelschool c.q. secondary education (gymnasium), schools for secondary education with two, three and four year courses
3. institutes for higher education
4. institutes for education for adults.

The grundskola is devided in three levels from each three years. During the first six years all pupils have the same education, in the last three years there is a kind of differentiation in more theoretical, more practical orientation, and so on.
In the new gymnasium there are 21 different directions. The technical education takes four years, the three year courses give an introduction to the university education. The two year courses are vocational education. Higher education is devided in university education and education comparable with university education and some forms of higher vocational education.

4. Sovjet Union

Primary and secondary education. At seven children have to go to school.

Compulsory education is eight years on a ten years school for primary and secondary education. After the 8th class pupils make an examination. Then there are the following choices:

- continuation in the 9th and 10th class
- education for three or four years in a specialized school (technicum)
- leaving school and possible part time education.

Higher education is provided by:

- universities
- polytechnical institutes for higher technical education with different faculties
- specialized institutes for agricultural, pedagogics, economics, law, and so on for the education of specialists on a high level.

When you compare the Dutch educational system with that in other countries some differences are striking.

1. The fact that public and private schools have the same financial base. The state has continuous concern with education but there is a great fear, except from financing and providing general rules for education, for static pedagogic. That means that private schools when they meet standards set by the government for quality there is a great freedom for the arrangement of education in their schools. There is a differentiated system for supporting the schools: educational research, curriculum development, school guidance, but all those kinds of institutions or kinds of support have to take into account the different denomination and the structure in this respect of the Dutch education.
2. There is a high differentiated educational system with different forms for secondary vocational and higher education. In the most of the surrounding countries there is after years of experimentation a more simple structure. The system in the Netherlands should meet the needs of the individual pupils, but the problem is that it also reflects the whole structure of the Netherlands in social-economic groups and so on. There are connections between the different types of schools but when a student goes into one type, most of the time he remains in that. That means that the year of 11 or 12 is the moment for most of the children to make a choice for the whole educational career afterwards.

3. There is a high differentiated system for special education. But providing such a system means that a lot of children who are not special in the general way, go into that system and remain into that system of special education. The question is if it is not better for a child to remain in the regular school system that will better meet the individual needs of the children than at this time.
4. Generally spoken the results of our school system are good, but not so good when you compare it with results of the systems abroad and as could be expected on base of high differentiation. Foreigners agree that the level of students when they enter the university is very high, but that it is disappearing during the university education. A not so kind statement about the level of the university education in the Netherlands.

Even when you only look abroad there are enough reasons to start some innovations, changes in the education system. That is the subject of the last part of this paper.

5. Development/innovation within the educational system

During the past there were several developments in different types of the system; for instance the preparation of the new act of primary education. The imputes for the educational innovation is given by Van Kemenade during his first term as Minister of Education. He has written a consultative document, entitled: "the contoures of a future educational system", published in June 1975. This memorandum is a blueprint for the educational system that will be introduced in the Netherlands in 20 to 25 years time. The structure of the system would basicly be as follows:

1. All children have a basic education comprising:
   - a new combined nursery and primary school for 4 - 12 year olds and
   - a middle school for 12 - 15/16 year olds.

   Children who need special adapted educational provisions, because of mental, physical or social handicappes attend special schools. The basic education will be provided full time during the day, it will not be categorical instruction and there will be no distinction between general education and vocational education. General education and vocational orientation will be equaly important for all pupils.

2. Basic education is followed by highschool, devided into three streams relating to activities in society and the qualifications linked to these. Highschool students will be able to choose from three streams:
   - an academic stream of two years duration, preparing the children for admission to higher education courses;
   - a three to four years stream which prepares students for occupations at middle level;
   - a two to three years stream which prepares students for occupations of a lower grade.
3. Higher education will comprise the present university education and higher vocational education but the range of courses will be much more varied than at the moment.
4. In addition to the first road to education that is full time attendance at highschool and higher educational courses, there will be a second road to education which will offer young people the chance to get qualifications while they are working full time or part time. There will be also second chance education providing facilities for adults of any age who, having travelled the first road, still want to get qualifications which for what ever reason they had no chance to acquire before. Second chance education and second road education will generally spoken come within the framework of the open school.
5. After the period of compulsory education which will last till the end of the 15th year a system of learning rights will become operative.

As far as the points of departure behind the proposals for changing the educational system are concerned, it is emphasized that these are intented to remove the practical problems and bottlenecks in the current education system. These includes unequal participation in education, the relatively little intention that is paid to prepare students for adult life and developing human qualities other than the intellectual and technical ones, the excessive emphasis that is laid on continuous full time education and the need to adjust education to individual differences in interests, skills, social experience and phase of development and to increase students influence on the nature and content of there courses. The problems pinpointed are a natural consequence of conceptions of the role of education now and in the future. That it should contribute to a development of a society whose members have more equal chances of participating in knowledge, culture, the human environment affluence, work and especially in desicion making.

What is realised from these ideas and proposals:
The new Nursery and Primary Education Act submitted in the parlement in 1977 expected to come into force, not in 1983 as was expected before but in 1985. Then five year olds will come under the Compulsory Education Act. In fact 98% of these group was attending nursery schools in 1976 without being any compulsion for them to do so. The implementary provisions of the act will allow it to be applied flexible. On the same date - 1976 - 94% of all four year olds were also attending nursery schools. Depending on experiences with compulsory education for five year olds it can be decided in a few years time whether the same measure is desirable and necessary for four year olds. In the society there is no disagreement about this change in the structure of nursery and primary education. A lot of experiences are under way providing information how we can put this two types of schools together and implement the results in other schools.
Also there are a lot of experiences in developments which intend to make ordinary schools more equiped for the individual children demanding for help without sending them to schools for special education. That means that policy, teachers and schools should pay more attention to the individual child and if possible to create proper arrangements within the ordinary school. Beside that there should be within the system a possibility for special education, but for less children than the 5% that goes now into one or another form of special education.
The most important innovation and the innovation with the most discussion about is that of the secondary education. As we have seen the secondary schoolsystem in the Netherlands is very segmented. There are different types of schools for general education and vocational education, catering for different aptitudes of students. Although there are made some corrections, improvements in the system during the fifties, the structure of the whole remained the same. In the sixties and early seventies there was a great deal of criticism of the secondary school by educational theorists, educational research, labour unions, and so on. This criticism was based on research reports about the participation of different social classes in education, ideas about equal opportunities, and so on.
The main principles mentioned in the memorandum "contours of future education in the Netherlands" were:
- The choice of further study and a career is postponed until a later date. Nowadays, in the selectivecategorical educational system, children

generally have to choose at the age of 12, which usually has radical consequences for the rest of their lives. In the comprehensive school the choice is postponed until as close as possible to their 16th year.

- The efforts of the primary school to offer equal, i.e. optimal opportunities to all children for development are continued. It is expected that a contribution can be made by reducing any disadvantages caused by home background and by the limitations of the traditional female role.
- The content of the education offered to 12 to 16 year olds can be broadened. This can be achieved by increasing the number of subjects and offering opportunities for a more balanced and less narrow development of all the skills the children have. These explicity includes the creative or artistic organisational and social skills.
- Suitable teaching and learning situations can be offered for individual development and the stimulation of social awareness.

More than hitherto education can help people to stop regarding society and their place in it as a foregone conclusion and to see them instead of things which they themselves can do something about. After that memorandum and the discussion about it, the Minister of Education at the time, Van Kemenade, started a so-called comprehensive school experiment. In the Netherlands it is possible to carry out experiments in education on the base of a special law for experimentation that enables schools to try out educational ideas in practice. In this case it means that comprehensive education is not provided by law but should be the result of an experimentation process. On the base of the experimentation law schools can be involved in an educational change process, relatively outside the ordinary school system.
The comprehensive school experiment started in 1975. The strategy of change behind it was that there should be a connection between development in schools and what is going on on national level (Ministry). The Minister of Education appointed an advisory committee for the comprehensive school experiment which was to advise him about experimental progress, the strategy of change, the support for the experiment, and so on. When the experimental process started only two schools were involved. In the schoolyear 1981-1982 ten schools will participate in the experimental process.

In between the political scene changed after 1975. After Van Kemenade of the socialistic party Pais of the conservative party became Minister of Education in 1977. The conservative party is against the development of the comprehensive school replacing the whole secondary school system and in favour of a more differentiated, segmented school system for secondary education. Pais did not stop the experimental process but he did not give it new impulses and he has withdrawn some money especially within the support of the innovative process. Furthermore Pais has written his own discussion for secondary education for the future, which is in conflict with the ideas of comprehensive education. This means that in the political scene the comprehensive school did not make much progress and making no progress means in education diminishment of ideas of involvement of people and so on, as can be seen by the increase from two schools in 1975 to only ten schools in 1981-1982. In my opinion a lot of faults are made in the whole innovation process for the comprehensive school. That is the reason that we do not have at this moment a comprehensive school but even not the ideas necessary for setting up or building a new secondary school system. The only thing that we can hope is that there will be a second term for Van Kemenade and that in that second term he will be able to make a better legal base for the comprehensive school. But not only a legal base for the comprehensive school is necessary but also an educational base, ideas about the goals objectives not so broadly estated in the memorandum and above that a development of higher education. Then after the comprehensive school students should go to one or another form of higher education. These impetus of the innovation process in the comprehensive school means a change and further development of the system of higher education too. Then for real innovation of the Dutch educational innovation at higher education (university and vocational) is a turning point of the educational innovation.

A lot of people in this room are in some way or another involved in the innovation of the university education but even if it influences a lot of people and most of all the financial base of the universities and a little bit the goals and the assets used within university education it is not the innovation that will be necessary on a long term. That includes integration of higher vocational education and university education on the open university. But at this moment I hope that even if it is not the main reason starting the two phases structure within

university education, the two phases structure itself will contribute to the innovation within the university.
Then, maybe for the first time the university can contribute to the innovation of the educational system as a whole.

At the end of my lecture I wish to thank the people who made it possible for me to speak, my secretary, the Information Department of the Ministry, but most of all the people of the Netherlands who made a education system so complex that one can talk about it so long.

Haren, October 28, 1981 Bert P.M. Creemers

OFFICIAL NAME : Research Instituut voor het Onderwijs in het Noorden (R.I.O.N.)

TRANSLATED NAME : Educational Research Institute in the North (of the Netherlands)

R.I.O.N.
Research Instituut voor het Onderwijs in het Noorden
Nieuwe Stationsweg 5-9
9751 SZ HAREN
tel. (050) 349643/349674/349793

INSTITUTE PRESENTATION: SOME INFORMATION ABOUT R.I.O.N.

OFFICIAL NAME : Research instituut voor het Onderwijs in het Noorden (R.I.O.N.)

TRANSLATED NAME : Educational Research Institute in the North (of the Netherlands)

1. BACKGROUND AND FUNCTION

The foundation year of R.I.O.N. was 1970. Actually the institute started in 1973 by the coordination of researchprojects, which until that moment fell under the responsibility of the State University of Groningen.
As term of reference is still operative: to advance on non profit base research on education for the use of the teaching practice, the educational policy and the science.
In majority the funds are supplied by the Foundation of Educational Research (S.V.O.) and by the Department of Education in the ratio 3 : 7. The effort of the institute is to increase the portion of the S.V.O.-funds.
At this moment there are 23 researchprojects. The size of the staff is about 80 persons, including 25 professionals. The present director is Prof.dr. Bert P.M. Creemers.

2. RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY

The State University of Groningen (R.U.G.) is the parent organization of the institute. The contacts between R.I.O.N. and R.U.G. are of an governmental, administrative and educational character.
The university gets educational and personal support of the R.I.O.N., the R.U.G. performs the duty of employer to the R.I.O.N.-personnel.
The co-operation with the State University will be (re)intensified in the near future.

3. THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

R.I.O.N. combines two lines of approach to set up priorities for educational research within the institute. The first line of approach concerns the scientific and social propositions and developments; the second line of approach concerns the existing attainments of the institute.

With reference to the national programma of educational research of the Foundation for Educational Research (S.V.O.), R.I.O.N. has chosen for a number of central research themes in 1979.

Most research is practical or applied.

4. THEMES AND PROJECTS

The present central research themes and (a selection of) research-projects are:

a. PRIMARY EDUCATION

- Investigation for the diagnostic and remedial functions of education
- The link-up between regular education and special education
- Special education
- Evaluation research
- Internal organization and team functioning in the primary school

b. SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Comprehensive school
- Schoolsize and perception of school, teacher-pupil-relations, curriculum, schoolorganization

c. CURRICULUM RESEARCH

- Inquiry into the skills and knowledge required for future (prospective) teachers
- Problem solving in vocational and technical education
- Curriculum, education and learning
- Evaluationresearch on a integrating higher education experiment

d. PARTICIPATION EDUCATION

e. REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

- Regional determinants of the labour supply and educational development and participation
- The development of a method of regional planning of a secondary education

R.I.O.N. has periodical publication on research: R.I.O.N. bulletins and Annual reports. A list of monographs is available.

5. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 1981 some new main essentials of research based on the chosen themes are outlined, which may play an important role in future developments. These essentials are:

- Evaluation of educational innovations
- Curriculum - evaluation - decisionmaking
- Internal school organisation and teamfunctioning
- Schooling of teachers in secondary education
- Special education
- Experiental and practical learning and
- Teacherplanning.

Hare, oktober 1981.
KK/ED